

April 6, 2025 • The Fifth Sunday of Lent

St. Mary



St. Michael

15164 Juniper Dr., Marne MI 49435
616.677.3934 • www.saintmarysmarne.org

17150 88th Ave., Coopersville, MI 49404
616.384.4026 • www.saintmichaels.us



Pastor: Rev. Michael Hodges

frmhodes@grpriests.org • For emergencies please call: 616.745.1409

Saint Mary Parish Staff

St. Mary Parish Office Hours

Monday 9:00AM - 4:30PM
Tuesday 9:00AM - 4:30PM
Wednesday 9:00AM - 11:30AM
Thursday 9:00AM to 4:30PM
Friday Closed

Deacon

Tom Roberts
troberts@saintmarysmarne.org

Business Manager

Todd Kline
businessmanager@saintmarysmarne.org

Parish Secretary

Cathie VanGessel
secretary@saintmarysmarne.org

Director of Faith Formation

Debbie Veneklase
dre@saintmarysmarne.org

Director of O.C.I.A.

Adult Bible Study
Jill Brown

Maintenance

Jim Looks

Custodian

Marian Looks

Liturgical Minister

Gary Karr
gakarr@saintmarysmarne.org

Music Director

Dr. Bernie Stanko
616.490.3836
berniestanko@hotmail.com

St Mary Prayer Line

616.677.3934 or
Linda at 677.3269
For evening requests call
Darlene 616.453.0157 or
email bfa1414@yahoo.com

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Deacon

Tom Roberts
troberts@saintmarysmarne.org

Business Manager

Todd Kline
bsmgr@saintmichaels.us

Parish Secretary

Beki Rotman
secretary@saintmichaels.us

Director of Faith Formation

Debbie Veneklase
childrensministry@saintmichaels.us

Director of O.C.I.A.

Cliff Kozminski
616.437.5318

Maintenance

David Goosen

Custodian

Carol Reens

Liturgical Minister

Kevin Kilpatrick
liturgy@saintmichaels.us

Scrip Coordinator

Brenda Kilpatrick
616.837.6363

St Michael

Prayer Line

Chris Albrecht
616-403-7110

Judy Driedger

616-899-2470

Weekend Mass Schedule

Saturday 4:00PM • St Michael
Saturday 6:00PM • St Mary
Sunday 8:30AM • St Michael
Sunday 10:30AM • St Mary

Weekday Mass Schedule

Tuesday 12:00PM • St Mary
Adoration begins after Mass until 3:30PM
Wednesday 12:00PM • St Michael
Adoration begins after Mass until 3:30PM
Thursday 12:00PM • St Mary
Friday 12:00PM • St Michael

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Tuesday and Thursday 12:30PM to 1:30PM • St. Mary
Wednesday and Friday 12:30PM to 1:30PM • St. Michael
Saturday 3:00PM to 3:45PM • St. Michael
Sunday 12:00PM to 1:00PM • St. Mary

Mass Schedule & Intentions

Saturday April 5

4:00PM † Felix & Catherine Styburski by the Styburski Family ...MI
 6:00PM † Agnes Schwartz by Leon SchwartzMA
 Sacrament of Reconciliation: 3:00 PM—3:45 PM - St Michael

Sunday April 6

8:30AM † Jamie Thomas by John & Denise AndersonMI
 10:30AM † Sandra Scheid by FamilyMA
 Sacrament of Reconciliation: 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM - St Mary

Monday April 7 No Mass

Tuesday April 8

12:00M † Mary Klein by FamilyMA
 Adoration begins after Mass until 3:30pm
 Sacrament of Reconciliation: 12:30-1:30PM - St. Mary

Wednesday April 9

12:00PM † Bernice & Henry Zeman by the Styburski FamilyMI
 Adoration begins after Mass until 3:30pm
 Sacrament of Reconciliation: 12:30-1:30PM - St. Michael

Thursday April 10

12:00M † Rosemary Helzer by Knights of Columbus #11581 ...MA
 Sacrament of Reconciliation: 12:30-1:30PM - St. Mary

Friday April 11

12:00PM † Thomas Larson, Jr. by John & Sandy BrooksMI
 Sacrament of Reconciliation: 12:30-1:30PM - St. Michael

Saturday April 12

4:00PM Our Parish FamilyMI
 6:00PM Our Parish FamilyMA
 Sacrament of Reconciliation: 3:00 PM—3:45 PM - St Michael

Sunday April 13 Palm Sunday of The Passion of The Lord

8:30AM Our Parish FamilyMI
 10:30AM Our Parish FamilyMA
 Sacrament of Reconciliation: 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM - St Mary



MA=St. Mary

MI=St. Michael's

Scripture Readings for the Week of April 6, 2025

Sunday

Fifth Sunday of Lent

Is 43:16-21; Ps 126:1-2, 2-3, 4-5, 6; Phil 3:8-14; Jn 8:1-11
 Scrutiny Readings: Ez 37:12-14; Ps 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8; Rom 8:8-11; Jn 11:1-45 or Jn 11:3-7, 17, 20-27, 33b-45

Monday

Dan 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62 or 13:41c-62; Ps 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6; Jn 8:12-20

Tuesday

Num 21:4-9; Ps 102:2-3, 16-18, 19-21; Jn 8:21-30

Wednesday

Dan 3:14-20, 91-92, 95; Dan 3:52, 53, 54, 55, 56; Jn 8:31-42

Thursday

Gen 17:3-9; Ps 105:4-5, 6-7, 8-9; Jn 8:51-59

Friday

Jer 20:10-13; Ps 18:2-3a, 3bc-4, 5-6, 7; Jn 10:31-42

Saturday

Ez 37:21-28; Jer 31:10, 11-12abcd, 13; Jn 11:45-56

Sunday

Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion

Lk 19:28-40; Is 50:4-7; Ps 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24; Phil 2:6-11; Lk 22:14-23:56 or Lk 23:1-49

St. Michael's Liturgical Ministers

	April 12—4:00PM	April 13—8:30AM
Altar Servers	NEED TWO	Aiden Rogers Melena Lindberg
Eucharistic Ministers	Sue Felicioni NEED TWO	Debbie Veneklas Mary Guilbault Rob Guilbault Jeff Johnson Zack Nelson Cindy Lindberg Jennifer DeMull
Lector	Mark Phillips	Carl Pohlman
Sacristan	Sue DeVos	Judy Driedger
Ushers	NEED TWO	Jim Ponshair Calvin Lindberg Joe Meerman Peter Nielsen
Music	Craig Bleckley	Craig Bleckley

St. Mary's Liturgical Ministers

	April 12—6:00PM	April 13—10:30AM
Sacristan	Marian Looks	Gary Karr
Altar Servers	Kassidy Britt MaKaelyn Britt	Lauren LeMieux Calvin Davis
Precious Body	Deacon Tom	Deacon Tom Bruce Kamp Becky Warners
Precious Blood	Jim Looks Need	Margie Jirous Christina Withers June Stevenson Nettie Leale
Hospitality	Need	Len Horter Need
Lector	Angie Hanks	Nicolette Looks
Music	Bernie Stanko	Bernie Stanko

Parish Cluster Holy Week Schedule

Holy Thursday - April 17

Mass of The Lord's Supper

7:00PM at St Mary -
 Msgr. Louis Stasker
 Followed by Night Watch
 until 10:00pm
 7:00PM at St Michael -
 Fr. Michael Hodges
 Followed by Night Watch
 until 10:00pm



Good Friday - April 18

3:00PM at St Mary -
 Good Friday Service - Msgr. Louis Stasker
 3:00PM at St Michael -
 Good Friday Service - Fr. Michael Hodges
 8:00PM at St Mary - Tenebrae Service with Gary Karr

Holy Saturday - April 19

9:00PM Easter Vigil at St Mary - Msgr. Louis Stasker
 9:00PM Easter Vigil at St Michael - Fr. Michael Hodges

Easter Sunday - April 20/

Mass of the Resurrection of the Lord

8:30AM at St Michael - Fr. Michael Hodges
 10:30AM at St Mary - Msgr. Louis Stasker

All are Welcome

Cluster News and Community News and Events

Rooted in Christ - Next Steps Meeting

Please join Fr. Mike for a parish cluster meeting regarding the next steps in the "Rooted in Christ" pastoral planning process. Parishioners are asked to meet in the **St Michael Family Center** on

Wednesday, April 9 at 6:00 PM, where Fr. Mike can inform the parish of the results of the study conducted and answer questions. Rooted in Christ information:

<https://grdiocese.org/rooted-in-christ/>



Fr Mike's Musings - (article re-post from March 9)

It has been six months since our parishes implemented the current liturgical schedule for Masses and Confession. As was pointed out when this began, I would be observing and making note of attendance and the performance of ministerial duties at liturgies. As such I have concluded and have been admonished by higher authorities to do so, to revise the schedule by eliminating one of the weekend Masses.

Effective the weekend of April 26-27 the 6:00 PM Saturday Mass at St. Mary will be taken off the schedule. When the schedule was first developed it was with the intention of keeping things equal between the parishes. However, whether through intransigence or disinterest, nothing ever came of this particular Mass time. It had taken the character of the previous Sunday Mass that had been eliminated at St. Michael—minimal attendance and lack of volunteers for liturgical ministries. We cannot trade one substandard situation for another. It serves no purpose. Before the "observations" begin about how viable the former 4:30 PM Saturday Mass at St. Mary was, let me tell you now, it was not. The same situation was developing—minimal attendance and lack of ministry volunteers. Besides the attendance/service difficulties, there is another factor that entered into the making of this decision.

There are specified limits set by Canon Law as to how many Masses a priest may say. Canon 905 states the following:

"A priest is not permitted to celebrate the Eucharist more than once a day except in cases where the law permits him to celebrate or concelebrate more than once on the same day. If there is a shortage of priests, the local ordinary can allow priests to celebrate twice a day for a just cause, or if pastoral necessity requires it, even three times on Sundays and holy days of obligation."

The Code of Canon Law is the legal authority that governs the earthly function of the Church and its ministries. Given the shortage of available priests, the strictures of the above quoted canon, and the numbers of faithful that view the availability of Masses more as a convenience rather than an opportunity Bishop Walkowiak has determined that the maximum number of Masses offered by a single priest be that allowed by Canon Law—three. This is not only in accord with the canon but is also set to prevent fatigue and eventual burnout among the serving clergy.

Admittedly I was violating this canon for the past three years by trying to accommodate St. Mary and St. Michael with the offering of two Masses on the weekend in each parish. I reasoned that as the pastor of each parish I could "legally" do this. Not so. The canon is addressed to the number of Masses a single priest may offer, not the number of Masses in a single parish. The diocese did take notice and strongly suggested that I make the proper adjustments.

The decision is not only based on the tenets of Canon Law but is also in accord with the ongoing "Rooted in Christ" strategic planning program within the diocese. This plan is being developed in response to the growing clergy shortage and is designed specifically to better utilize our parish resources and the services of our active priests and deacons. In the list of priorities set in the mission statement of the program it was determined by the bishop and the delegated diocesan authorities that a Mass should not be regularly scheduled unless:

"...attendance at a Sunday Mass is 50% or more of the church's seating capacity or at least 100 people..."

With an average attendance of between 35 and 45, the 6:00 PM Saturday Mass has no reason for being other than my own wrong-minded attempt at maintaining some semblance of equality. The low attendance numbers and lack of ministerial volunteers made this decision the proverbial "no-brainer".

Inevitably there will be complaining that I am playing favorites or that I am just being unfair. Neither is the case. I am making every effort to effectively serve our parishes, sometimes while knowingly violating the instructions of higher authorities. However, things have gotten to the point in the diocese and in the Church where we can no longer take for granted that things will always continue as they have in the past. The Church is not a glorified country club for social gatherings and communal chit-chat. It is where the faithful gather for the reverential and obligatory worship of God the Father through His incarnate Son, Jesus Christ, for the salvation of His people. This is why we exist, and whatever must be done to preserve this function will be done. What is happening is a sign of the times where personal preferences and desires frequently override our faith and its practices. The liturgical life of the Church is not scheduled around convenience and preferences, if the methods employed are seen by some as inconvenient—then so be it. The spiritual and liturgical life of the Church, its ministers, and the faithful should and will take precedence over personal convenience—always.

April 6, 2025 ~ The Fifth Sunday of Lent

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Please Pray for our Engaged Couple

Sam Felicioni and Lindsay Ebling

June 14, 2025 (St Michael)

Lord God, the source of all love, the wise plan of your providence has brought these young people together. As they prepare themselves for the sacrament of marriage and pray for your grace, grant that, strengthened by your blessing, they may grow in their respect for one another and cherish each other with a sincere love. We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen

Bulletin Sponsor of the Week

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St Mary Faith Formation

Children's Liturgy of the Word (CLW):

Pre-School thru 2nd Grade During 10:30 AM Mass.

Today is the Fifth Sunday of Lent. Father Mike is using the Scrutiny reading from year A.

In John 11:1-45, Jesus, upon hearing of his friend Lazarus's illness, delays his arrival in Bethany, only to arrive four days later, where he raises Lazarus from the dead, demonstrating his power over death and affirming his identity as the resurrection and the life. There is no CLW today due to Spring Break. Enjoy your time with family.

1st-7th Grade Faith Formation Classes - Wednesdays at Hall / 6:00- 7:30pm

There are no Religious Education Classes Wednesday, April 9th due to Spring Break. Faith Formation will resume on Wednesday, April 16. Our school year ends on Wednesday, April 16th. Families are asked to join us for Rosary prayer service and to celebrate in the Community room with an Ice Cream Social. Have a wonderful Spring break with your families!

8th Grade - Confirmation Classes - Wednesdays at Hall / 6:00- 7:30pm

Congratulations to the newly Confirmed, Noah, Mason, Alivia, Aaron, Amelia, Benjamin, Brian, Kaitlyn, Casey and Katy on your Sacrament of Confirmation.

May you hold Jesus Christ forever in your heart and may the memory of this special day stay with you always.

Questions

Please contact Debbie Veneklas at

dre@saintmarysmarne.org or 616.677.3934



Vacation Bible School

July 6 -10, 2025

The Great Journey with Jesus

Watch for more details.



Cor-Prayer, Formation & Fraternity for Men

Saturday, April 12, 2025, 7:00 AM

The men of Knights of Columbus 11581 are excited to share the implementation of Cor, a new formation and fraternal opportunity for the men of our parish. Cor exists to form and strengthen Catholic men in faith and virtue as missionary disciples by drawing them into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ through prayer, formation, and fraternity. Cor will be held the 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month at 7:00 am in the St. Mary's community room. This is open to all men of our parish cluster, not just knights. If you have any questions, please reach out to Robert Lothschutz at 616-292-5964.

Upcoming Dates: April 6, 26, May 17, 31, June 14, 28

Soup Supper

April 11, 2025 at 6:30PM

An Evening of Food and Fellowship ~ ALL ARE WELCOME!

The Soup Super tradition is a gathering to pray and share a simple meal during Lent. At this meal we share by placing our abundance in a common pot, eating less ourselves, and bringing the surplus to those in need.

Join us for Stations of the Cross at 6PM along the Outside Meditation Path.
Stations will be led by the
Knights of Columbus Councils #11581 & #9909
Stations will be moved inside pending weather conditions.

PLEASE CALL THE PARISH OFFICE TODAY TO RESERVE YOUR SEAT!

NO COST to attend. Donations will be accepted and the proceeds given to The St. Marys Christian Service Fund



Knights of Columbus #11581 News

How to become a Knight: You can enroll in the Knights of Columbus immediately as an "Online Member" by scanning the QR Code. Once you complete and submit the form on that page a local council will contact you. For additional Information or to learn more about what the Knights do, Contact Grand Knight: Bruce Kamp b.kamp@charter.net / Phone 616-780-4941



Tootsie Roll Drive- April 12/13. Get a Tootsie Roll, for a donation to help us support Special Olympics.

Also, there will be Knights in the back of church after Mass to sign up anyone who would like to join our Council.

Giving Back to God

Mass: Attendance 3/29- 6:00PM: 53	
Mass: Attendance 3/30 10:30AM: 161	
Adult Contributions	\$3085.00
Children Contributions	\$15.00
Loose Contributions	\$145.00
Capital Improvement	\$500.00
Online Giving	\$1300.00
Catholic Relief Services	\$770.76
Total	\$5815.76
Weekly Offertory Needed for Budget	\$6642.58
Offertory-YTD Budget vs YTD-Actual	\$-9114.57

Thank you for your continued support and generosity! To donate now, open your phone camera, scan the QR code and follow instructions.



Welcome to the Cluster Parishes of St. Mary and St. Michael

St. Michael's Parish News

Scrip News— Thank you to our 12 families that purchased Scrip this week. Our total profit was \$115.75.



St. Michael's Parish Family

Remembers in Their Prayers: Kevin Johnson, Anne Pols, Alexandria Gordon, George Langlois, Brooke Campbell, Linda Abel-Carroll, Jackie May, Dennis Goosen, Jean Mayse, Kathie Poelma, Ken Heflin, Marvin Hecksel, Payton Patterson, Pat Harlett, the victims of abortion, & the men and women in the military.

St. Michael's Ladies' Tea Party —

A big thank you for everyone who donated and all of the wonderful volunteers who helped to make this possible! Great job!



St. Michael's Faith Formation

Children's Liturgy of the Word: program is offered on Sunday during 8:30 Masses. Children 3-9 years old are welcome to join us each week as we pray, read and explore the Sunday Gospel from a child's



viewpoint. We include the Gospel Acclamation so children understand the importance of preparing our mind and heart for the Gospel reading. **In today's Gospel Jesus commands Lazarus to come out of the tomb, and Lazarus, who had been dead for four days, is raised to life. Jesus affirms that he is "the resurrection and the life," and that whoever believes in him will live even though they die. There is no CLW today we are on Spring Break.**

Elementary Faith Formation: The elementary program is for students in grades 1-5. We meet on Wednesday from 6:00- 7:30 pm. Our program ended this past Wednesday. We are on Summer break. Thank you catechist and helpers for your dedication in sharing our Catholic faith with the Faith Formation students! Your generosity of giving your time and talent is greatly appreciated! Thank you! *Please continue to pray for our First Communicants as they continue to prepare for the Sacrament of First Holy Communion: Quincy, Jase, Annette, Johnathan, Jayden and Kenten.*



Middle School Faith Formation: Grades 6, 7 and 8 is on Summer Break. Thank you Catechists for helping to catechize the students. Class will resume in September. *Congratulations to our newly Confirmed students Lucas, William, Braden, Peyton, Sean, Alayna, Cole, Lainey and Celia. May the Holy Spirit guide you always!*



St. Michael's Sanctuary Lamp

for +Sherry Maslowski
by the Maslowski Family

Congratulations . . .



. . . to our newly Confirmed students Lucas, William, Braden, Peyton, Sean, Alayna, Cole, Lainey and Celia. May the Holy Spirit guide you always!

Knights of Columbus News

Fish Fry Dinners! Every Friday during Lent (except Good Friday) — **5:30-7:00 PM.** Come to Stations of the Cross at 6 PM and then enjoy a fish dinner! Gluten-free baked cod, deep-fried cod, tater tots, jalapeno poppers, fries, coleslaw, green beans, grilled cheese, and dessert. Adults: \$13, Ages 6-10: \$6, Under 6: free

Giving Back to God

March 29/30 2025

Mass: Attendance 3/15- 4:00PM:	77
Mass: Attendance 3/16 8:30AM:	172
Adult Envelopes	\$3,156.00
Loose Cash	\$213.00
Children's Envelopes	\$14.00
Total	\$3,383.00
Building Fund	\$20.00
Catholic Relief Services	\$730.00
Weekly Offertory Needed for Budget	\$4,449.39
Offertory-YTD Budget vs YTD Actual	+\$9,732.79

Thank you for your continued support!

Online Giving — Now there's an even more convenient way to contribute to St. Michael's! To donate now, open your phone camera, scan the QR code and follow instructions. Or text the word GIVE to: 616-384-5011.



April 6, 2025 ~ The Fifth Sunday of Lent

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Does Baptism Forgive Sins or Take Them Away?

Jesus didn't just forgive the woman caught in adultery. He said, "I do not condemn you." Does this mean she was no longer an adulteress? The answer is yes, but to understand it, we have to understand Baptism.

The earliest Christians only knew of one sacrament to take away sins: It was Baptism. Through Baptism people accepted the "grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ," came to know the "love of the Father," and entered into the "fellowship of the Holy Spirit." They received Baptism as adult converts, and by Baptism they were freed from all their sins, totally reconciled to God, made children of the Father "in Christ" and heirs of all the promises of the Good News. It all came through Baptism. Reconciliation, the confession and forgiveness of sins committed after Baptism, was only recognized as a distinct sacrament later.

This is important, because Baptism is the key to understanding all forgiveness of sin. We cannot understand what Reconciliation does except by understanding what Baptism does.

Through Baptism God does not just forgive our sins; he takes away our sins. In every eucharistic celebration we proclaim Jesus, not as the one who forgives the sins of the world, but as the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. The difference is crucial.

(No play on words is intended, but "crucial," which comes from crux—"cross"—is the right word. It is because of the cross that Jesus can take away, and not just forgive, our sins.) If God just forgave us, there would be a change in him, but not in us. "Forgiveness" would mean that God is not angry with us, that he is not going to punish us, that he accepts us back as his children in good standing, and so forth. But we would be exactly what we were. Only God's attitude would be different.

But if Jesus takes away our sins, then we are different. We are no longer guilty. We are actually cleansed,

APRIL 6, 2025

5TH SUNDAY OF LENT

Isaiah 43:16-21; Philippians 3:8-14;
John 8:1-11

purified, innocent again. The bad actions that were part of our history, our life story, no longer affect or determine who we are. They are no longer part of us. This seems impossible. How can an action that is part of the history that makes us who we are cease to be part of who we are? How can we ever not be the persons we have become? Before we give an answer, let us repeat what we believe:

Jesus does not just forgive (do something on his side); he takes away the sins of the world. And what can that mean if not that our sins are no longer part of our life, no longer a real, determining element of who we are? However we explain it, the fact is that our sins no longer exist. Baptism takes them away. To see this, we need to understand Baptism.

The real nature of Baptism is best expressed through immersion. Baptism is not just a washing; it is a going down into the grave with Jesus to rise again with him. We are baptized "into Christ," into the body that hung on the cross. As members of that body on the cross, we died in him when he died. And when he rose, we rose in him to live a new and different life on earth: a life not only human but divine. We rise up from the waters of Baptism to live as the risen body of Jesus, to continue his saving presence and work on earth.

This means our past died in Jesus. Our history of sin ended when we died in him at Baptism. And our life story began anew when we rose from the grave, rose out of the waters of Baptism, as his risen body on



earth. We are “a new creation.” God says, “Behold, I make all things new!”

(For further reflection, read these Scripture texts: John 20:19-23; Romans 6:1-11; 2 Corinthians 5:14-21; Galatians 3:23-29; Ephesians 4:14-24; Colossians 2:9-15.)

REFLECTING ON THIS WEEK'S GOSPELS

Fifth Week of Lent

***Pray daily:** Jesus, through your death and rising you made all things new. Through my Baptism you made me a “new creation.” Help me to live out the death I accepted in Baptism and live the new life I received. Amen.*

Monday: John 8:1-11: Then Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again.” Are you aware that Jesus has said these same words to you through Baptism? Do you hear them again every time you receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation? What effect do they have on you? Do you truly believe God does not despise you?

Tuesday: John 8:21-30: Jesus said, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will realize that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own, but I speak these things as the Father instructed me.” What actions in your life make it so obvious you have “died” to merely human goals and behavior that people recognize the divine life of grace within you?

Wednesday: John 8:31-50: Jesus said, “If you were Abraham’s children, you would be doing what Abraham did.” Do the things you do make you stand out as a child of God, or do you fit right in as a product of your culture? What did Abraham do? How are you doing the same thing?

Thursday: John 8:51-59: Jesus said, “Very truly, I tell you, whoever keeps my word will never see death.” What do you think death will be for you? Do you believe that by dying in Christ by Baptism, you have already risen in Christ? What does that mean to you?

Friday: John 10:31-42: Jesus said, “If I am not doing the works of my Father, do not believe me. But if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father.” Can you say this? Are you the Body of Christ by Baptism, and a temple of the Holy Spirit? How does that show in your actions?

Saturday: John 11:45-57: Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said, “You know nothing at all! You do not understand that it is better for you to have one man die for the people than to have the whole nation destroyed.” How did Jesus’ death save us? Do you think it just “paid our debt,” or do you understand that through Baptism “into Christ” we died in Christ on the cross and our sins were annihilated? What difference does this make in the way you feel about your past sins?

SEVERAL SUGGESTIONS FOR LENT

Prayer: Each day recite from memory Luke 1:28 and 42 (you know these verses; they are the first half of the Hail Mary). But hear them as said to yourself. Think of how Baptism makes you God’s “highly favored one” (the biblical meaning of “full of grace”). How is the Lord “with you”? Why are you “blessed among people”? Why is the “fruit of your life” blessed? Close your refection each day with the second half of the Hail Mary.

Fasting: Abstain for a week from negative thoughts about yourself. Each time you notice a fault in yourself, think of how you have died in Christ by Baptism and risen to live a new life in him, as a “new creation.” Bless yourself with water each morning as a reminder of your Baptism and to help you do this.

Almsgiving: Begin making Easter presents for people to whom you are close. Make something which will express to them that they are a new creation, filled with divine life, precious in the eyes of God.

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